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try, its sinking to its present level must have been attended with convulsions and floods, which could scarcely have failed to obliterate all vestiges of moraines.

An objection, brought from the known change of temperature in Greenland within modern times, was met by observing, that Greenland in its best days was always a land of glaciers; in the extent of which it is easy to suppose an occasional increase or diminution.

Mr. J. Huband Smith gave an account of the discovery, in the month of November last, of a human skeleton, accompanied with weapons, ornaments, &c., interred on the sea shore, in the vicinity of Larne, in the county of Antrim.

He suggested, that a timely effort to preserve a record of such interesting discoveries, can hardly fail to rescue from destruction some valuable "scattered leaves belonging to the lost books of history."

The locality in which these remains were found is one of considerable historical interest; it was within less than a mile of Olderflete Castle, where it will be remembered that Edward Bruce landed with a considerable force for the invasion of this country, in the beginning of the fourteenth century. A very cursory inspection, however, suffices to shew that these weapons and ornaments could not have belonged to one of his followers, but must be referred to a period considerably more remote. They consist of a sword of very characteristic form, double edged, and rounded at the point; measuring two feet eight inches and nearly a quarter in its extreme length; a small portion, said to have been about six inches in length, was broken off and lost at the time of its discovery; the blade varies from two inches to two inches and a quarter in breadth;—the head of a lance (both this and the sword are of iron or steel, much corroded);—a small and very elegantly formed bronze pin, which measures five inches and a half in

length, thickly encrusted with verd antique, and of the shape usually supposed to have been used in fastening the cloak or mantle ;—and lastly, four fragments of bone ; three of them be-

ing portions of a comb, the back of which (attached to the serrated part by rivets) is slightly but not untastefully carved on both sides ; and the fourth is so minute and indistinct, as to render its original use and form uncertain.

The manner in which the skeleton was discovered was thus : some lime quarries having been lately opened along the shore, at a distance from the jetty, or wooden pier, at which small coasting vessels, trading between Larne and the opposite ports of Scotland, usually take in their cargoes, it became necessary, for the greater convenience of transporting limestone from the newly opened quarries, to construct a rail or tramway. In leveling the line marked out

for the purposes of such construction, in the afternoon of the 7th of last November, the workmen discovered these remains at a spot three quarters of a mile distant from the town

of Larne, about seventy yards from the sea shore, and about five feet above the level of high water mark. The skeleton, when uncovered, lay obliquely, the head pointing towards the N. W. The soil about it, consisting of sand, without almost any admixture of clay, may have, in the lapse of time, shifted its depth; but there scarcely appeared to have been more than from eighteen inches to two feet of sand or soil above these remains.

There was no appearance of stone kist, or hollow space formed by flags set edgeways, which appear to belong exclusively to the more ancient interments preceded by cremation; fragments of the skeleton alone being found in such, with indications of the action of fire, and usually accompanied by one or more cinerary urns. Yet although there was in the present instance no trace of coffin, either of stone or wood, there appeared no reason to doubt that the interment was effected in a regular and orderly manner. Across the breast was found the sword, its handle disposed towards the right hand. On the same side, but beneath the sword, was the lance head. The position of the remaining articles was not noticed at the time by the workmen, and therefore cannot now be ascertained.

Mr. Smith placed beside these weapons a sword and lance from his collection, selected from some found in the remarkable heap of bones in the townland of Lagore, near Dunshaughlin, in the County of Meath; a paper descriptive of which was read before the Academy by Doctor Wilde, on the 27th of April last. The straight shape and uniform breadth of the blade of this last mentioned sword, and the form of the lance head, appeared remarkably similar, though on a reduced scale, to those of the weapons found near Larne. The comb and bronze pin are nearly identical with several of those discovered at Dunshaughlin, where, it is observable, no brazen weapon of any description occurred.

From a consideration of all these circumstances, Mr. Smith ventured to express an opinion that the remains found at Larne, as well as those at Dunshaughlin, are to be referred to that remote period when the use of brass or bronze was superseded by iron and steel in the manufacture of offensive weapons, while it was yet retained in the lighter works of ornament. From the invariable shortness of the Dunshaughlin swords, he was disposed to infer, that the remains there discovered were of a period not far removed from the age of the bronze swords of similar length, still not unfrequently found in Ireland ; while he suggested, that the articles to which the present paper referred might be considered as furnishing a closely following, though later link in the chain.

The sword bears no slight resemblance to one which has been engraved in Walker's Essay on the Costume and Arms of the Ancient Irish, and which, attributing it to the Knights Templars, he states to have been found about forty years before, near the site of the old priory of Kilmainham. It was accordingly objected, that the weapons found at Larne belonged to some one of that Order, and were therefore of a much later date than that assigned to them as above mentioned. In reply to this, Mr. Smith urged the remarkable circumstance of the bronze pin, of unquestionable antiquity, having been found in connexion with the sword, a fact of which he was able to give the most decisive assurance, upon the testimony of the overseer of the works, a person of strictest integrity, and who, not having any antiquarian predilections, could not be aware of the force or nature of the evidence he was furnishing. It was also to be recollected, that long antecedent to the establishment of the priory of Knights Templars by Richard Earl Strongbow, in 1174, a monastic institution had been founded there by St. Magnen, from whom Kilmainham (which in many ancient documents is written *Kilmaynan*) took its name so early as the sixth or seventh century of our era ; and that the adjoining burial

ground was used by the Irish, we learn from the Munster book of battles, attributed to Mac Liag, a poet who died in the year 1015, where it is recorded, that several of the chiefs who fell at the battle of Clontarf were interred at Kilmainham.

In the hall of the Commander of the Forces is suspended a sword of the same shape and character found in the old burial ground, vulgarly known by the name of "Bully's Acre," about forty years ago. In some adjacent fields, between the immediate grounds of the Royal Hospital and the brink of the river Liffey, about four years ago, some labourers, employed in raising gravel, discovered a skeleton, around which were disposed a variety of weapons and ornaments; they are now in the possession of the Commander of the Forces, and Mr. Smith had the advantage of inspecting them. They consist of a sword, lance head, and brass or bronze pin, all of precisely the same form and character as that now exhibited to the Academy. The total length of the sword is 3 feet 2 inches, the blade being 2 feet 8, and the handle 6 inches in length; the pin measures about 6 inches. There was also found along with these a hatchet head, and some fragments of iron, so much shattered and corroded as to occasion some difficulty in coming to the conclusion, which however may be just, that they once formed an iron skull cap. Common rumour asserts, that the labourer, by whom these remains were discovered, had also the good fortune to find with them some ornaments of gold of considerable value; which fact, for prudential reasons, he kept profoundly secret; but its effects became speedily apparent, in a well-stocked shop, which he soon afterwards opened in a village not ten miles distant from Dublin.

In the Memoirs of the French National Institute,* a memoir is given, furnished by M. Mongez, concerning a Gaulish sword, as he denominates one found in the bed of the river

* *Literature et Beaux Arts*, tom. V.

Somme, near Abbeville. A comparison of his description, as well as of the engraving appended, shews this sword to have been nearly identical in form and size with those found in Ireland. This description, which applies in a remarkable manner to the sword exhibited to the Academy, is as follows :

“Sa lame et sa poignée ne font qu'un tout solidement affermi ; elle a deux tranchans, et, loin d'être terminée en pointe, elle est obtuse et arrondie a son extremité. . . . Il n'y manque que l'osier tressé, ou la corde, ou le bois, ou enfin la substance qui entouroit la soie pour former une poignée solide. . . . La lame prolongée forme la soie sur laquelle est fixée la traverse de la poignée par le moyen de deux clous rivés ; et la masse imparfaitement arrondie qui la termine est traversée et maintenue par cette même soie. . . . Longueur totale, 33 pouces 10 lignes ; lame seule, 28 pouces 10 lignes ; poignée, 5 pouces ; largeur de la lame a la poignée, 2 pouces 3 lignes.”

If it be kept in recollection, that the French inch is somewhat greater than the English, these measurements will be seen to correspond surprisingly with those of the sword found at Larne. M. Mongez's paper exhibits great research and learning. He quotes passages at length, from Polybius, Plutarch's *Life of Camillus*, Dion Cassius, and Strabo, which describe with considerable minuteness the swords which the Gauls used in their engagements with the Romans ; and he rests his argument not only on the identity he alleges of these descriptions with that of the sword found near Abbeville, but also on the fact of bronze and brazen ornaments having been found with skeletons having similar iron or steel weapons about them, discovered in 1788 at Velu, near Bapaume, in Artois. He adds, “Je puis donc assurer que l'épée qui est sous les yeux de la classe est l'épée gauloise décrite par les auteurs anciens. J'ajouterai que c'est la seule à ma connaissance qui soit conservée. On jugera d'après cela combien elle est précieuse pour l'étude des costumes anciens.”

Mr. Smith, in conclusion, drew the attention of the Academy to the circumstance that those and many other venerable and most interesting remains of remote antiquity, which are but rarely, and at distant intervals of time, discovered in Great Britain, and on the Continent, literally abound in Ireland; and hence inferred, the incalculable advantage which will be attained, in the study of the ancient history not only of this country but of the world, by the formation of a great National Museum of Irish Antiquities, such as is at present projected to be formed under the auspices of the Academy.

“Without claiming any undue importance for the pursuit of antiquarian research, it nevertheless has its office, and that by no means an ignoble one, as the handmaid of history—‘*Principatum non habet; ancillari debet.*’ It furnishes the critical student not only with curious information and the most valuable commentary on minute points, but summons up for him a host of most important witnesses, whom, though silent, he can subject to the most scrutinizing examination again and again; on whose testimony, carefully weighed as to its true value, history ever rests as on its securest basis.”

The reading of a paper by the Rev. T. R. Robinson, D. D., “On the Constant of Refraction, determined by Observations with the Mural Circle of the Armagh Observatory,” was commenced.

A paper by Dr. Andrews of Belfast, “on the Heat developed during the Combination of Acids and Bases,” was read.

The general conclusions at which the author arrives are contained in the two following Laws.

Law 1. “The heat developed during the union of acids and bases is determined by the base, and not by the acid; the same base producing, when combined with an equivalent of different acids, nearly the same quantity of heat, but different bases a different quantity.”